

## 2017 Summer Reading Guide for Rising 8<sup>th</sup> Graders

Dear Rising 8<sup>th</sup> Graders,

Meredith is looking forward to starting 8th grade with you in September 2017! Below is your Summer Reading Guide. All assignments are due on the first day of classes (not orientation) in September. Email Ariel with questions at [arielsacks@rencharter.org](mailto:arielsacks@rencharter.org).

- Assignment 1: Read at least TWO of the books listed. You are encouraged to read as many as you can! (Audiobook versions of the books are allowed.)
- Assignment 2: For **each of the books**, write a narrative, describing your reading experience. Include a paragraph on each of the following questions:
  1. Why did you choose this book?
  2. What did you expect to happen (or to learn) as you began reading? Why?
  3. What confused or surprised you as you continued reading? Why? (If nothing surprised you, explain why the book was so predictable.)
  4. Upon finishing the book, what message or lesson do you think the writer was trying to teach readers?
  5. Overall, what is your opinion of the book? Why?
- Assignment 3: Pick ONE of the books you read. **Complete a creative project** from the attached list of options.

OR

**If you are a voracious, independent** reader and plan to read a TON this summer... you may do Option Q instead of Assignment 1, 2 and 3. **In order to qualify for Option Q**, you must have **Vincent's written approval** and you must **speak to Ariel** about it before the school year ends.

- Option Q: Create your own summer reading adventure. Read a ton of books of your choosing (from this list or beyond). Keep a journal of your reading journey. Your journal must include some writing about each book you choose (for example, why you chose it, what stood out to you in the book and what you thought of it). Your writing can also include creative responses to the book (see project lists for assignment 3 in this packet for ideas). You can include drawing, collage, photography etc. All responses must be in your journal.

Happy Reading!  
Ariel & Meredith

## —FICTION—



### ONE

by Sarah Crossan (2015, Greenwillow Books).

Grace and Tippi are conjoined twins, joined at the waist, defying the odds of survival for sixteen years. They share everything, and they are everything to each other. They would never imagine being apart. For them, that would be the real tragedy. But something is happening to them. Something they hoped would never happen. And Grace doesn't want to admit it. Not even to Tippi.



### ORBITING JUPITER

by Gary Schmidt (2015, Clarion Books).

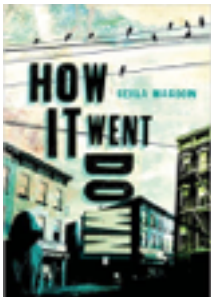
Jack, 12, tells the gripping story of Joseph, 14, who joins his family as a foster child. Damaged in prison, Joseph wants nothing more than to find his baby daughter, Jupiter, whom he has never seen. When Joseph has begun to believe he'll have a future, he is confronted by demons from his past that force a tragic sacrifice.



### THE STRANGE AND BEAUTIFUL SORROWS OF AVA LAVENDER

By Leslye Walton

Magical realism, lyrical prose, and the pain and passion of human love haunt this hypnotic generational saga. Foolish love appears to be the Roux family tradition, an ominous forecast for its youngest, Ava Lavender. Ava—in all other ways a normal girl—is born with the wings of a bird. In a quest to understand her peculiar disposition and a growing desire to fit in with her peers, sixteen-year old Ava ventures into the wider world, ill-prepared for what she might discover and naïve to the twisted motives of others.



### THIS IS HOW IT WENT DOWN

By Kekla Magoon

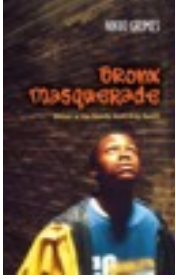
When sixteen-year-old Tariq Johnson dies from two gunshot wounds, his community is thrown into an uproar. Tariq was black. The shooter, Jack Franklin, is white. In the aftermath of Tariq's death, everyone has something to say, but no two accounts of the events line up. Day by day, new twists further obscure the truth. Tariq's friends, family, and community struggle to make sense of the tragedy, and to cope with the hole left behind when a life is cut short. In their own words, they grapple for a way to say with certainty: This is how it went down.



### MARVEL 1602

By Neil Gaiman

In *Marvel 1602*, award-winning writer Neil Gaiman presents a unique vision of the Marvel Universe set four hundred years in the past. Classic Marvel icons such as the X-Men, Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four and Daredevil appear in this intriguing world of 17th-century science and sorcery, instantly familiar to readers, yet subtly different in this new time. *Marvel 1602* combines classic Marvel action and adventure with the historically accurate setting of Queen Elizabeth I's reign to create a unique series unlike any other published by Marvel Comics.



## BRONX MASQUERADE

By Nikki Grimes

When Wesley Boone writes a poem for his high school English class and reads it aloud, poetry-slam-style, he kicks off a revolution. Soon his classmates are clamoring to have weekly poetry sessions. One by one, eighteen students take on the risky challenge of self-revelation. Award-winning author Nikki Grimes captures the voices of eighteen teenagers through the poetry they share and the stories they tell, and exposes what lies beneath the skin, behind the eyes, beyond the masquerade.



## RASH

By Pete Hautman

It's late in the twenty-first century, and the United Safer States of America (USSA) has become a nation obsessed with safety. For Bo Marsten, a teenager who grew up in the USSA, it's all good. He knows the harsh laws were created to protect the people. But when Bo's temper flares out of control and he's sentenced to three years of manual labor, he's not so down with the law anymore. Bo's forced to live and work in a factory in the Canadian tundra. The warden running the place is totally out of his mind, and cares little for his inmates' safety. Bo will have to decide what's worse: a society that locks people up for road rage, or a prison where the wrong move could make you polar bear food.



## SAME SUN HERE

By Silas House and Neela Vaswani

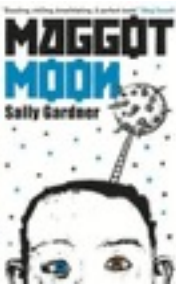
Meena and River have a lot in common: fathers forced to work away from home to make ends meet, grandmothers who mean the world to them, and faithful dogs. But Meena is an Indian immigrant girl living in New York City's Chinatown, while River is a Kentucky coal miner's son. As Meena's family studies for citizenship exams and River's town faces devastating mountaintop removal, this unlikely pair become pen pals, sharing thoughts and, as their camaraderie deepens, discovering common ground in their disparate experiences.



## MY NAME IS NOT EASY

By Debby Dahl Edwardson

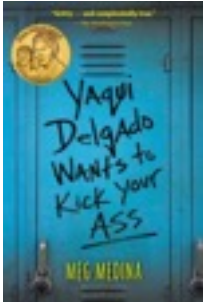
Luke knows his Iñupiaq name is full of sounds white people can't say. So he leaves it behind when he and his brothers are sent to boarding school hundreds of miles away from their Arctic village. At Sacred Heart School, students—Eskimo, Indian, White—line up on different sides of the cafeteria like there's some kind of war going on. Here, speaking Iñupiaq—or any native language—is forbidden. And Father Mullen, whose fury is like a force of nature, is ready to slap down those who disobey. Luke struggles to survive at Sacred Heart. But he's not the only one. There's smart-aleck Amiq, a daring leader— if he doesn't self-destruct; Chickie, blond and freckled, a different kind of outsider...



## MAGGOT MOON

By Sally Gardner

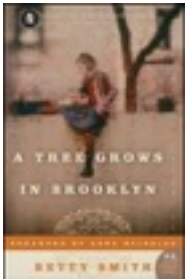
Set in a ruthless regime, an unlikely teenager risks all to expose the truth about a heralded moon landing. What if the football hadn't gone over the wall. On the other side of the wall there is a dark secret. And the devil. And the Moon Man. And the Motherland doesn't want anyone to know. But Standish Treadwell — who has different-colored eyes, who can't read, can't write, Standish Treadwell isn't bright — sees things differently than the rest of the "train-track thinkers." So when Standish and his only friend and neighbor, Hector, make their way to the other side of the wall, they see what the Motherland has been hiding. And it's big...



## **YAQUI DELGADO WANTS TO KICK YOUR ASS**

By Meg Medina

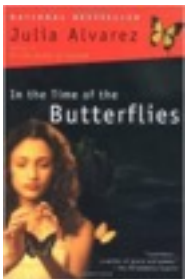
One morning before school, some girl tells Piddy Sanchez that Yaqui Delgado hates her and wants to kick her ass. Piddy doesn't even know who Yaqui is, never mind what she's done to piss her off. Word is that Yaqui thinks Piddy is stuck-up, shakes her stuff when she walks, and isn't Latin enough with her white skin, good grades, and no accent. And Yaqui isn't kidding around, so Piddy better watch her back. At first Piddy is more concerned with trying to find out more about the father she's never met and how to balance honors courses with her weekend job at the neighborhood hair salon. But as the harassment escalates, avoiding Yaqui and her gang starts to take over Piddy's life. Is there any way for Piddy to survive without closing herself off or running away?



## **A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN**

By Betty Smith

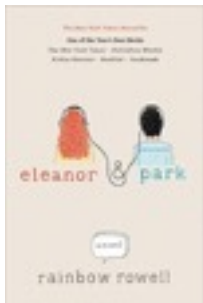
The beloved American classic about a young girl's coming-of-age at the turn of the century, Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* is a poignant and moving tale filled with compassion and cruelty, laughter and heartache, crowded with life and people and incident. The story of young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie Nolan and her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Williamsburg has enchanted and inspired millions of readers for more than sixty years.



## ***In the Time of the Butterflies***

by Julia Alvarez

*In the Time of the Butterflies* is a historical novel, written by Julia Alvarez, relating chronicling the Mirabal sisters during the time of the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. In this extraordinary novel, the voices of all four sisters—Minerva, Patria, María Teresa, and the survivor, Dedé—speak across the decades to tell their own stories, from hair ribbons and secret crushes to gunrunning and prison torture, and to describe the everyday horrors of life under Trujillo's rule.



## **ELEANOR AND PARK**

By Rainbow Rowell

This is a story of first love, which very slowly builds from the first day Eleanor sits next to Park on the school bus. First they ignore each other, and then they slowly become friends through their love of comic books and 1980s alternative music. Park is the only good thing in Eleanor's life. Her home life is a miserable exercise in trying to stay out of her abusive stepfather's way, and finding new ways to wear the same clothes repeatedly since there is no money for anything extra. Park adores everything about Eleanor, and she finds refuge at his house after school with his understanding parents. Things finally explode and their relationship is truly tested.

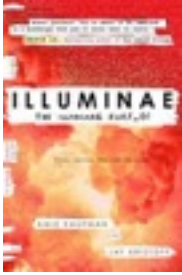


## **FAR FAR AWAY**

By Tom McNeal

Jeremy Johnson Johnson hears voices. Or, specifically, one voice: the ghost of Jacob Grimm, one half of The Brothers Grimm. Jacob watches over Jeremy, protecting him from an unknown dark evil whispered about in the space between this world and the next. But Jacob can't protect Jeremy from everything. When coltish, copper-haired Ginger Boultinghouse takes a bite of a cake so delicious it's rumored to be bewitched, she falls in love with the first person she sees: Jeremy. In any other place, this would be a turn for the better for Jeremy, but not in Never Better, where the Finder of Occasions—whose identity and evil intentions nobody knows—is watching and waiting, waiting and watching...

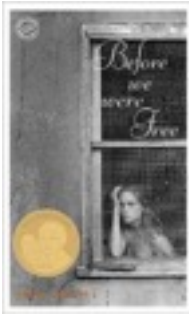




## **ILLUMINAE (The Illuminae Files)**

By Amy Kaufman

Kady Grant has typical problems: school, parents, and a boyfriend she just dumped. But life spirals out of control when Kady's planet, Kerenza, is attacked by an unknown enemy. As destruction unfolds around her, Kady manages to escape her planet on one of three ships. Kady is considered lucky, with her mother on one ship and her ex, Ezra, on another. As the convoy flees Kerenza with the enemy close behind, it is clear that the problems have just begun.



## ***Before We Were Free***

by Julia Alvarez

Anita de la Torre never questioned her freedom living in the Dominican Republic. But by her 12th birthday in 1960, most of her relatives have emigrated to the United States, her Tío Toni has disappeared without a trace, and the government's secret police terrorize her remaining family because of their suspected opposition of el Trujillo's dictatorship. Using the strength and courage of her family, Anita must overcome her fears and fly to freedom, leaving all that she once knew behind.



## **THE REVOLUTION OF EVELYN SERRANO**

By Sonia Manzano

There are two secrets Evelyn Serrano is keeping from her Mami and Papi: her true feelings about growing up in her Spanish Harlem neighborhood, and her attitude about Abuela, her sassy grandmother who's come from Puerto Rico to live with them. Then, like an urgent ticking clock, events erupt that change everything. The Young Lords, a Puerto Rican activist group, dump garbage in the street and set it on fire, igniting a powerful protest. When Abuela steps in to take charge, Evelyn is thrust into the action. Tempers flare, loyalties are tested. Through it all, Evelyn learns important truths about her Latino heritage and the history makers who shaped a nation.

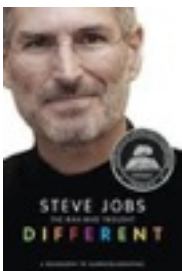
## **NON FICTION:**



## **HELLO CRUEL WORLD: 101 Alternatives to Suicide for Teens, Freaks, and Other Outlaws**

By Kate Bornstein

Bornstein bravely and wittily shares personal and unorthodox methods of survival in an often cruel world. A one-of-a-kind guide to staying alive outside the box, Hello, Cruel World is a much-needed unconventional approach to life for those who want to stay on the edge, but alive. Designed to encourage readers to give themselves permission to unleash their hearts' harmless desires, the book has only one directive: "Don't be mean." It is this guiding principle that brings its reader on a self-validating journey, which forges wholly new paths toward a resounding decision to choose life.



## **STEVE JOBS: The Man Who Thought Different**

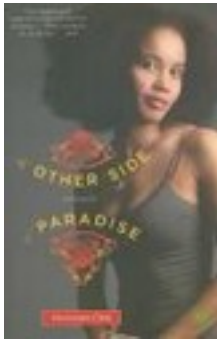
By Karen Blumenthal

Steve Jobs was given up for adoption at birth, dropped out of college after one semester, and at the age of twenty, created Apple in his parents' garage with his friend Steve Wozniack. Then came the core and hallmark of his genius--his exacting moderation for perfection, his counterculture life approach, and his level of taste and style that pushed all boundaries. A devoted husband, father, and Buddhist, he battled cancer for over a decade, became the ultimate CEO, and made the world want every product he touched.



## **THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE BARBIE: A Doll's History and Her Impact on the U.S.** By Tanya Lee Stone

During her unparalleled fifty-year history, Barbie has been the doll that some people love-and some people love to hate. There's no question she's influenced generations, but how? Tanya Lee Stone takes an unbiased look at how Barbie became the icon that she is, and at the impact that she's had on our culture (and vice versa). Featuring passionate anecdotes and memories from a range of girls and women and original color photographs, this book explores the Barbie phenomenon in a brand-new light.

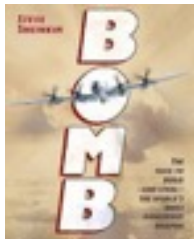


## **THE OTHER SIDE OF PARADISE: A MEMOIR**

By Staceyann Chin

Staceyann Chin has appeared on television and radio, including "The Oprah Winfrey Show," CNN, and PBS, discussing issues of race and sexuality. But it is her extraordinary voice that launched her career as a performer, poet, and activist. Here, she shares her unforgettable story of triumph against all odds in this brave and fiercely candid memoir..

No one knew Staceyann's mother was pregnant until a dangerously small baby was born on the floor of her grandmother's house in Jamaica, on Christmas Day. Staceyann's mother did not want her, and her father was not present. No one, except her grandmother, thought Staceyann would survive.

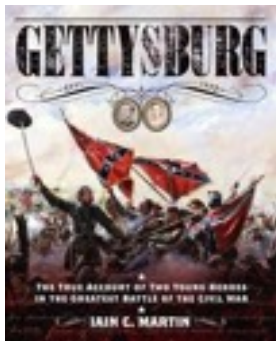


## **BOMB!:**

### **The Race to Build--and Steal--the World's Most Dangerous Weapon**

By Steve Sheinkin

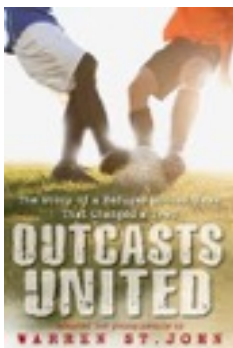
In December of 1938, a chemist in a German laboratory made a shocking discovery: When placed next to radioactive material, a Uranium atom split in two. That simple discovery launched a scientific race that spanned 3 continents. This is the story of the plotting, the risk-taking, the deceit, and genius that created the world's most formidable weapon. This is the story of the atomic bomb.



## **GETTYSBURG:**

### **The True Account of Two Young Heroes in the Greatest Battle of Civil War** By Iain C. Martin

In the summer of 1863, General Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia advanced into Pennsylvania in a daring offensive to win the Civil War in a single campaign. They met the Union Army at a quiet crossroads town called Gettysburg, and engaged in the greatest battle ever fought on American soil. Three days of combat ended on July 3 with Pickett's Charge, a heroic assault by nine of Lee's brigades against the Union defenses on Cemetery Ridge. At the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery that November, Lincoln used the occasion to deliver his Gettysburg Address, a short, two-minute speech that became the most famous in American history.

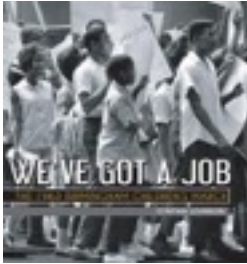


## **OUTCASTS UNITED**

### **The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team That Changed a Town**

By Warren St. John

This is a complex and inspirational story about the Fugees, a youth soccer team made up of diverse refugees from around the world, and their formidable female coach, Luma Mufleh. Clarkston, Georgia, was a typical southern town until it became a refugee resettlement center. The author explores how the community changed with the influx of refugees and how the dedication of Luma Mufleh and the entire Fugees soccer team inspired an entire community.



## **WE'VE GOT A JOB** **The 1963 Birmingham Children's March**

By Cynthia Levinson

*We've Got a Job* tells the little-known story of the 4,000 black elementary, middle, and high school students who voluntarily went to jail in Birmingham, Alabama, between May 2 and May 11, 1963. Fulfilling Mahatma Gandhi's and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s precept to fill the jails, they succeeded where adults had failed in desegregating one of the most racially violent cities in America. Focusing on four of the original participants who have participated in extensive interviews, *We've Got a Job* recounts the

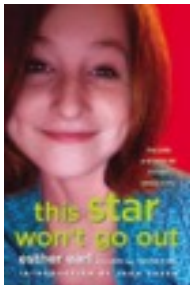
astonishing events before, during, and after the Children's March.



## **THE NAZI HUNTERS: How a Team of Spies and Survivors Captured the World's Most Notorious Nazi**

By Neal Bascomb

In 1945, at the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann, the head of operations for the Nazis' Final Solution, walked into the mountains of Germany and vanished from view. Sixteen years later, an elite team of spies captured him at a bus stop in Argentina and smuggled him to Israel, resulting in one of the century's most important trials -- one that cemented the Holocaust in the public imagination.



## **THIS STAR WON'T GO OUT:** **The Life and Words of Esther Grace Earl**

By Esther Earl

In full color and illustrated with art and photographs, this is a collection of the journals, fiction, letters, and sketches of the late Esther Grace Earl, who passed away in 2010 at the age of 16. Essays by family and friends help to tell Esther's story along with an introduction by award-winning author John Green who dedicated his #1 bestselling novel *The Fault in Our Stars* to her.



## **AMAZING, FANTASTIC, INCREDIBLE**

By Stan Lee; Illustrated by Colleen Doran

Stan Lee is the most legendary name in the history of comic books—he has been the leading creative force behind Marvel Comics, and has brought to life some of the world's best-known heroes and most infamous villains throughout his career. In this beautifully illustrated graphic memoir—illustrated by celebrated artist Colleen Doran—Lee tells the story of his life. Moving from his impoverished childhood in Manhattan to his early days writing comics, through his military training films during World War II and the rise of the Marvel empire in the 1960s to the current resurgence in movies, *Amazing Fantastic Incredible* documents the life of a man and the legacy of an industry and career.



## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Project Choices (Assignment 3)

### **Book Project Options:**

- i. Collage: Create a collage from magazine and newspaper images and words that reflects the major characters and plot events from your book. Your collage must be accompanied by a 1 page explanation of the images you included.
- ii. Alternate Ending: Extend your book's ending by tagging on an extra chapter! Or, if you found the ending disappointing, rewrite it the way you think should have happened. Your new chapter must be at least 1.5 pages.
- iii. Letter: Write a letter to one of the characters in the book. You can give advice about the character's conflict, praise for what the character has done, or support for what the character needs. This letter must be at least 1 page.
- vi. Reflection: Complete each of the following six sentence stems with a 1 paragraph response for each statement. **This book made me:** 1) realize that... 2) decide that... 3) wonder about... 4) connect to... 5) feel that... and 6) hope that...
- viii. Childhood Invention: Create a back-story of your protagonist's childhood in a 1 page paper. If your main character is an adult, try to figure out what s/he would have been like as a child. Make the connection between choices your protagonist made in the book and what his/her childhood was like.
- ix. Talk Show Interview: Design a fake Q&A (question and answer) between your character and a talk show host. Make the talk show host ask some difficult questions, and have your character answer honestly!
- x. Original Art: Develop and create your own original art project based on your novel. Color, photography, and/or computer graphics may be used. You must include a 1 page written explanation of your project, why you chose to represent this plot event or character, and its relationship to the novel.

(—> turn over for non fiction project choices)



## **Project Choices that work best with non-fiction books:**

Collage: Create a collage from magazine and newspaper images and words that reflects the major concepts and events from your book. Your collage must be accompanied by a 1 page explanation of the images you included.

Reflection: Complete each of the following six sentence stems with a 1 paragraph response for each statement. **This book made me:** 1) realize that... 2) decide that... 3) wonder about... 4) connect to... 5) feel that... and 6) hope that...

Talk Show Interview: Pretend you are an expert on the topic of this book OR a person in the book. Design a fake Q&A (question and answer) between you and a talk show host on this topic. Make the talk show host ask some difficult questions, and provide good answers!

Teacher: Create a project that teaches others about the topic of your book.